

Green Marketing: A Step Towards a Green India

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Abstract: Due to environmental problems like global warming, climate change, pollution, the greenhouse effect, natural resource depletion, etc., people are becoming more concerned about the environment. Environmental concerns have a significant impact on business in the modern corporate world and have an impact on all human activities. Environmental Sustainable Development became a main topic of discussion. Govt. of various countries are also very concerned about environmental issues. To achieve the sustainable environmental goal, Green Marketing is used as a tool. Green Marketing refers to the marketing of environment-friendly goods and services that has the least negative impact on the environment. Society is more conscious of the natural environment. It is a great opportunity for businesses to build their brand and good reputation in the minds of consumers by providing them eco-friendly, environment-sustainable products. This paper explains how companies can increase their consumer targeting, the challenges and opportunities businesses green marketing business face, and also explain the current state of green marketing in India, and the reasons why business firms are adopting green marketing today. Green marketing is a concept that will continue to grow in practice and demand.

Key Words: Green Marketing, Environment Sustainable Product, Environment Protection, Challenges.

INTRODUCTION:

Environmental concerns are more important than ever. We worry and consider how we may be nicer to the earth because of the big dangers such as air pollution, plastic in the oceans, global warming, and food waste. Millions of people have started purchasing socially conscious products despite their greater price in support of environmental health. Every day, more and more environmental harm is being caused by human activity. It quickly became a hot topic of conversation. Our government and society are becoming more concerned about environmental issues. It is an excellent opportunity for businesses to establish their brand in the eyes of consumers by offering eco-friendly, environmentally sustainable products. Academic institutions have incorporated the environmental concern into their curricula. By concentrating on green marketing, businesses are also attempting to set their products and services apart from those of their rivals.

The green represents is a symbol of purity. Green denotes purity of quality and justice or fairness in dealings. The idea of "green marketing" focuses on the preservation of the environment. Green marketing is the practice of promoting products and services that have minimal negative effects on the environment and are thus ecologically friendly. AMA states that "Green marketing is the study of the positive and negative effects of marketing operations on environmental issues." Water conservation, tackling global warming, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and offering eco-friendly goods and packaging are just a few of the challenges that are addressed by green marketing. It is a holistic marketing idea that encourages using things responsibly and disposing of them in a way that doesn't hurt the environment. Three areas are covered by green marketing:

- Encouraging the creation and consumption of pure, high-quality goods.
- Treating consumers and society with justice and fairness.
- Preserving the natural environment.

Objectives of Study: The main objectives of this paper are as follow

- To study the basic concept of green marketing
- Need of green marketing in the context of today's scenario
- Challenges posed by green marketing to companies
- Present status of green marketing
- And explain the initiatives taken by various firms mainly focusing on green marketing

What is a green product?

Green products are those that have the least negative effects on the environment both during their useful lives and when they are discarded. Characteristics of Green Products:

- No poisonous or damaging substances were used in its production.
- Which is readily recyclable, reusable and biodegradable
- Environmental preservation;
- no animal testing
- Eco – friendly packaging

Phases of green marketing

- **Ecological Phase:** The first phase of the ecological process involved conservation efforts that assisted in resolving environmental issues.
- **Environmental Green Marketing Phase:** The second phase of environmental green marketing focused on clean technologies with the intention of lowering waste and pollution levels.

- **Sustainable Green Marketing Phase:** The third phase, known as sustainable green marketing, was centered on producing high-quality, ecologically friendly products.

Classification of Companies Based on Green Marketing Concept:

According to Ginsberg and Bloom companies can be classified into four categories on the basis of green concept.

Lean Green	These companies adopt the eco- friendly practices but they do not focus to publicize these initiatives. These companies implement green practices only for the cost reduction and to increase productivity. Coca cola company can be defined as lean green company. Company has invested in various recycling activities and package alternation but they don't publicize it.
Defensive Green	These companies employ green marketing techniques as a preventative measure to stay out of trouble and to stay competitive. The companies adopt environmentally friendly practices to create positive brand image in the minds of target audience. These environment initiatives may be genuine but temporary because companies adopt green practices just to differentiate themselves from the competitors.
Shaded Green	Shaded green companies invest in long term, environment sustainable processes that require a financial and non-financial commitment. They differentiate their products on the basis of greenness. The primary objective of these companies is promotion of direct tangible benefits of the products and the promotion of environmental benefits is a secondary objective.
Extreme Green	Extreme green companies use a green marketing mix in the holistic manner. They integrate environmental approaches in overall marketing strategy. The main focus of these companies is greenness, concept of life cycle assessment, total environmental quality management, waste reduction and environmental friendly promotion etc. These business cater to a certain audience and distribute their goods through specialized shops and boutiques.

Need of Green Marketing:

- **Use of Dangerous Compounds:** The use of hazardous materials in goods like fertilisers, insecticides, and other items that endanger both the environment and people is the primary driver behind the move towards green marketing.
- **Not Easy to Dispose:** Plastic bags and containers are difficult to dispose of since they are utilized to package things. When these are destroyed, the ecosystem is seriously polluted.
- **Environmental Protection Act:** The government has passed a variety of acts and laws to safeguard the environment as a result of its current concern. Green marketing is a result of these environmental actions.
- **Awareness:** Consumers have grown more environmentally sensitive and more aware of their surroundings. Nowadays, they make use of green items the taking into account.

Golden Rules of Sustainable Marketing:

- **Utilization of Ecofriendly materials:** The cornerstone of green marketing is the creation of items made from sustainable resources. In order to create a product that is appropriate from an environmental perspective, producers should employ herbal, chemical-free material.
- **EcofriendlyPackaging:**
Utilize recyclable packaging, such as paper or jute, when possible. Utilizing recycled materials allows for the implementation of the green marketing strategy.
- **Utilize Natural Resources:** Marketers that practise green marketing should be required to include natural resources into their offerings. Fruits and flowers, for instance, can be included in products to provide colour and fragrance.
- **Recognize your clients:** Make sure your clients are knowledgeable about green products and aware of the problems your products are meant to solve. Whirlpool claims that because consumers are unfamiliar of what CFCs are, they are hesitant to pay a premium for a refrigerator that is CFC- free.
- **Transparency:** When promoting their products as ecofriendly, marketers should uphold moral standards. They ought to be open and honest about their assertions. The corporate policy need to fall in line
- **Consider Pricing:** Due to the high cost of production and the usage of better-quality materials, the marketer charges a premium price for their environmentally friendly product. However, the majority of the clients might not be able to afford these exorbitant costs, thus the business must take a realistic pricing into account.
- **Customer Participation:** Consumers should take part in the green marketing strategy. Customer will better understand the concept when they participate, and the problem of excessive pricing will be solved.
- **Reassure the Buyer:** The buyer has to be reassured that the product does what it is meant to accomplish since they won't sacrifice product quality for the sake of the environment.
- **Educating your Customers:** It's important to let people know why what you're doing to protect the environment is important as well as what you're doing to protect the environment.

Challenges in Green Marketing:

Green marketing is a new idea, and new ideas are not always easily received. The area of green marketing has certain difficulties/challenges which are explained as follow.

- **Huge Investment:** In order to implement green marketing, significant funds must be allocated to new technology creation, research, and acceptance. Recycling and renewal are difficult tasks that require expensive high-tech equipment. Making a large investment is difficult for small firms.
- **Not ready to pay premium:** The high manufacturing costs of green products result in high prices. India is a developing nation with extremely low per capita income. They are unable to pay a hefty fee. Dealing with consumers who are price sensitive is therefore a significant issue for businesses.
- **Lack of knowledge:** Green marketing is a new idea that is still developing. The majority of people are unaware of the advantages of green products. The majority of Indians live in rural regions, which is another significant factor in the lack of knowledge. Consequently, they are unaware of green products and green marketing.
- **Lack of Uniformity:** It is discovered that only 5% of the marketing messages from "Green" campaigns are totally factual, and there is a lack of standardisation to validate these claims.
Customers do not trust Indian firms' uniqueness since they do not adhere to international standards.
- **Be Patient:** Green marketing offers long-term opportunities to investors and commercial enterprises. It will take a lot of perseverance. It is a novel idea and will take some time to gain acceptance.
- **Non-cooperation:** It can be difficult for businesses using green marketing strategies to persuade stakeholders of the advantages of their actions in the long run vs the costs in the short run. And most of the time, they might not succeed in convincing them.
- **Inadequate Marketing Plan and Implementation:** The failure of green marketing in India is mostly due to poor marketing plan and implementation. So it is important to have a good strategy and then carry it out as planned.

Why Firms adopt Green Marketing?

- **Opportunity:** About 25% of Indian customers favor environmentally friendly items, while about 28% are arguably health conscious. By offering customers eco-friendly, environmentally sustainable products, businesses have a fantastic chance to establish their brand and excellent image. Due to growing public concern over the manufacture of polystyrene and ozone depletion, McDonald's switched from clamshell packaging to waxed paper packaging.
- **Social Responsibility:** Many businesses believe that as members of the community, they have a moral obligation to act in a more socially responsible manner. The manufacturer may view the transition to green marketing as a costly endeavour, but this is only a temporary setback. In the long run, this change is beneficial and essential.
- **Governmental Pressure:** The government also exerts pressure on businesses to take responsibility for safeguarding consumers' interests and the environment. The Indian govt. has created a number of policies and strategies to decrease the manufacturing of commodities with negative environmental effects.
- **Competitive Pressure:** The environmental initiatives of competitors also put pressure on businesses to alter their policies and switch to environmentally friendly goods and services. It gives competitive edge to companies and many companies have already adopted this method of marketing. When Snickers first began operation in India, they had little interest in using green marketing, but after six months they modified their marketing strategies and began focusing on using green marketing.
- **Cost Reduction:** Businesses are forced to change their behavior as a result of cost issues related to waste disposal and reduced material utilization.
- **Adding value for the Customer:** The majority of companies use green marketing to give their clients the best possible products and services. Businesses should be concerned with the wellbeing of their customers and offer environmentally friendly packaging.

Present Status of Green Marketing

Environmental marketing is seen as a tremendous opportunity for organisations to accomplish their goals. Businesses have seen that consumers are more concerned about their environment and health; therefore they avoid things that are bad for their environment and health. In India, significant initiatives are being done to include green marketing. Businesses have begun to see environmental marketing as a game changing strategy for achieving their goals and gaining competitive edge. Being socially responsible has begun to be recognised by organisations as a moral responsibility. There are quite few Green initiatives in India:-

- **Sanatan Bharat** - The government has provided 100% electricity to its villages as part of this initiative, resulting in a reduction of 38 million metric tonnes of annual CO2 emissions. The government intends to produce 450GW of renewable energy by 2030.
- **Wipro Green Machines:** The first company from India to provide environmentally friendly computer accessories was Wipro Indo tech. Wipro Greenware is a new line of laptops and desktop computers launched by the company. These goods are classified as ROHS (Restricted of Hazardous Substances), which reduces environmental e-waste.
- **Ban on Plastic** -The ministry of Environment, Forest and climate Change, mentions this in recent Plastic Waste Management Amendments Rules, 2021. The production, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single-use plastic are all banned. Now, many FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) firms are putting emphasis on using environmentally friendly methods. For instance Amazon India remove single - use plastic usage in packaging and replace it with paper packaging. The govt. has instructed major retailers like Big Bazar and D- Mart to provide consumers with paper and cloth carry bags.

Lead Free Paints:

A paint manufacturing company Nerolac has been attempting to rid its paints of dangerous heavy metals. Humans can be adversely affected by toxic heavy metals including lead, chromium, and mercury. They could affect the neurological system, kidneys, and lowering a child's IQ and perhaps causing memory loss etc.

CONCLUSION

Finally, we can state that while India has made numerous efforts in the area of green marketing, it is still in its early stages. The key to effective green marketing is to inform consumers about the issues harming our environment as well as the advantages of green products. Consumers should be encouraged to transition to ecofriendly items and should be prepared to pay a premium price for them. The government's laws and regulations are a crucial component of the successful implementation of green marketing.

Organizations, the government, and citizens must collaborate to make the world a better place to live. The term 'Green Marketing' relates to protecting the environment for the future generation, however this is not as simple to implement as it would first appear.

Organizations must conduct thorough planning and research to determine their viability in the market. Adopting green marketing may be challenging at first, but it will pay off in the long run.

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